

## **Counseling for Behavior Change**

It has been long established that changing behavior is a complex process. Ask anyone who has ever attempted to lose weight, stop smoking, or start an exercise program. The process is tangled in many stages as well as many types of motivation. What drives a middle-aged man to begin exercising will be quite different than what moves an adolescent to set sexual limits and boundaries. And while the process is a challenge when we attempt to make changes in our own lives, it is even more challenging when we are working to help others make changes in theirs.

In response to these challenges, this training was developed for professionals who work in the field of health and behavior change. It works to incorporate and understand the developmental stage of the target population of clients, the stages of change as described by Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcross, and the process of motivational interviewing (developed by Miller and Rollnick). These models and techniques have demonstrated themselves to be effective in first understanding how change occurs, and then learning how to “tap into” the forces that motivate individuals to engage in the change process.

Motivating ambivalent clients to change is one of the most confounding challenges that professionals face, and as clients fail to follow through on their stated desires, it can be a source of burnout and frustration. This training, with its practical approach to matching motivation with change stages can offer counseling professionals an excellent resource for helping even their most “resistant” clients develop the capacity to change!

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